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all kinds and degrees. I have expressed temperately and argumentatively my objections to the particular plans proposed by Socialists to dispense with private property; but on many other important points I agree with them, and on none do I feel towards them anything but respect, thinking, on the contrary, that they are the greatest element of improvement in the present state of mankind."

To those who hoped in these letters to come at Mill's family correspondence and to know better the deep heart of this great and good man, this collection is a disappointment; on the other, the number of vital and important subjects, religious, humane and political, upon which he unburdens himself in this correspondence, is unexpectedly large, and the two volumes form an important addition to the literary and philosophical data of the mid-century.

It is no small good to have all of Shelley's letters* gathered into these two compact volumes that amount to more than one thousand pages and yet are light in the hand and convenient for reference. Nearly forty letters are quite new, more than fifty others have fresh matter, and some of Harriet's and Mary Shelley's explain or augment the evidence in difficult places. Mr. Ingpen is the most cautious of editors; he sets down everywhere the text without a grain of comment, and even in annotating he is content at critical places to quote or condense the notes of Professor Dowden, Peacock, Williams, etc. In a single case he is good enough to warn the reader that Hogg is untrustworthy in respect of the correspondence for which we must depend on him. Perhaps this is carrying a scruple too far and the idea of impartiality has led to the brink of suppression of evidence. The opinion of the man who has handled and studied the actual letters must be worth more than that based solely on the printed page; for there is much of real value in the written sheet, crowded or spaced wide, or crossed or recrossed, hurried or deliberate or agitated. If no one else's manuscript was ever so psychological as Lamb's, with its changes of script betraying where he left off and recommenced, yet Shelley's own handwriting might supply, so to speak, the overtones to some of the more difficult and ambiguous letters and resolve them into clearer harmony.

* "The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley." Collected and edited by Roger Ingpen. 2 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.

We still need all the help conceivable to understand properly that complicated life and mysterious soul; the one so brief, so full of suffering and generous deeds; the other so intense, so tortured, so overflowing with love both human and ideal. Shelley was a profound Platonist; and he was homesick always for a nobler world than this; where, perhaps, "music and moonlight and feeling are one" and, furthermore, all discontent with the *less* supposes a sense of a just claim to the *greater*. It should be added to the credit of Shelley's admirable reason that he himself labelled this latter a Platonic sophism. He had, in prose, the clear mental processes and sound logical standards of that eighteenth century into which he was born and of which he was so characteristic a product, in his touching sense of the perfectibility of man's heart, the immanence of revolution, and the ultimate triumph of right reason. If in his poetry the solid structure of thought is veiled by misty moonlight effects, and the flicker of green and gold, by passion and beauty and mere quintessential poetry, it is no less present and discoverable. He would seem to have been a poet in the end almost in despite of himself; to have set greater store often by his controversial prose in philosophy and politics; to have uttered the poetry, like Plato's "Ion," in a kind of divine madness which he could neither explain nor estimate when he was out of the mood. Also he labored steadily in the preparation and discipline needful for a great work which, alas! he was destined never to undertake. He speaks lightly enough of this piece or that in the sight of the ideal beauty which he had. We praise it otherwise because we have only for comparison the poetry of other men.

The reading of these five hundred letters leaves as nothing else has ever done the profound sense of Shelley's unfulfilled renown. We see how slow he was in maturing, how tormented by bodily sickness, and we feel it is impossible to measure all that in the course of nature we were entitled to. At the outset he is an enthusiastic boy, devoured with ideas, often absurd, with the sort of absurdity we love and prize in the young as higher than any precocious wisdom or worldly prudence. His incredible generosity in matters of money and personal effort he never outgrew. It is inevitable, though vexatious, that those of his letters should have been kept most carefully which deal with business, but at least it gives us the chance to see how uniformly the

money was for some one else's needs. There was a good deal of the Oriental in Shelley's make-up, nowhere more marked than in his disregard of worldly comfort, money and of ordinary company. Under the Bô-tree he would have fared happily and well. He says, once or twice, under the stress of unhappy companionship, that he cannot be happy with more than one person at a time—that that one gives either great pleasure or great pain. His rare humor is ironic, sometimes almost acrid and very Asiatic. His enthusiasms for stupid and selfish people when they die by the violence of intercourse leave him indeed disillusioned, but never at the point where all is vanity. His own saying on this matter of enthusiasm is the last word:

"I think one is always in love with something or other; the error, and I confess it is not easy for spirits encased in flesh and blood to avoid it, consists in seeking in a mortal image the likeness of what is perhaps eternal."

The vital thing that we learn afresh from these letters is that his courage was always greater than his strength and his gallantry than either. Upon his relations with women, the most difficult, intricate and dubious question in his short life, these letters throw a good deal of light and then fail. They clean out some mare's nests, one hopes, for good and all. The whole case of Elizabeth Hitchener, of Eliza Westbrooke and Mrs. Boonville, and even of poor, foolish Harriet herself, is plain enough. When it comes to Mrs. Gisborne, Mrs. Williams and Claire, we should like to know more and to see the *Journal of Maria Gisborne* which Mr. Buxton Forman possesses, but has not yet printed. As for Claire, it is not easy to believe her a trustworthy witness. Love-poems mean frankly anything or nothing. Most frequently they are an imaginative or imitative exercise. Such warm, kindly affection as Shelley sustained toward men and women is always susceptible of misconstruction. He has his own little joke about his fate to find in every town he inhabits "some lady of forty-five, very unprejudiced and philosophical, who has entered deeply into the best and selectest spirit of the age with enchanting manners and a disposition rather to like me." One thing is certain, whether Shelley talked philosophy or sentiment or made outright love to all the Marias and Janes and Emilies and Sophias and Amelias, no woman was less happy for his acquaintance.

He gave joy and interest even where he carried away pain. Amid all the squalid quarrels of the Godwins and the sordid cares of the Hunts, and the baseness and vulgarity of the Westbrookes, and the flat dulness of his relatives, he stands unstained and unbefouled. Men and women alike leaned on him for daily bread and daily strength. His generosity was incredible; his power to soothe and enliven and encourage was almost as great. The kindest creature in the world, he knew himself reckoned a monster. A great lover, he knew that "some of us have in a prior existence been in love with an Antigone and that makes us find no full content in any mortal tie." Despite Mr. Ingpen and the late Matthew Arnold, to have kept company through these two volumes with this spirit, touched to finer issues, is to face life fortified by a larger charity, a keener sensibility, a nobler inner world than our own.

LITERARY STUDIES.

WHO would turn to a grammarian, of all men, for wit and gayety and vivacity? Professor Gildersleeve tells us in these lectures* that he has recently learned with a new shudder that some schools have classes in Gildersleeve, just as they have classes in conic sections, and he goes on plaintively to add: "I must say that I should not like to have my individuality merged in my Latin grammar and this sensible warm motion to become the kneaded clod of a crabbed text-book." And yet he makes an able and very witty plea for classical studies, since he says: "I myself have proved to my own satisfaction that the personal accountability for belief about which one hears so much nowadays is taught by a Greek negative, and that Schopenhauer's system is implicit in the only true doctrine of the Greek accusative. Do you wonder, then, that I am panoplied against the bird bolts that are aimed at grammar?"

The first lecture is a plea for classical studies, for Greek as one of the main channels through which life and culture flow; the second lecture concerns the relation of Greek literature to modern English literature; and the third is a highly interesting parallel

* "Hellas and Hesperia." Three lectures by Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1909.